



WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH NOTES

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	TITLE: 2009 Biological Deer Check Stations	

Abstract: During the 2009 deer-hunting season, division personnel examined 2,711 deer to assess sex and age-structure. Yearling deer represented 36% of the adult male harvest and 34% of the adult female harvest, both down 4 percentage points from 2008. The percentage of 1.5 year old males in the adult male harvest has decreased 10 percentage points over the last 3 years, while the yearling female harvest has remained relatively stable during that time.

During the 2009 opening weekend of the deer firearm season, division personnel aged and sexed 2,711 deer at 29 privately operated check stations and 12 Fish and Wildlife Areas statewide. Yearlings (1.5 years) accounted for 30% of aged deer and 2.5 year olds accounted for 34% (Table 1). Yearling deer represented 36% of the adult male harvest, continuing its downward trend since 2004 (Table 2). Female yearlings comprised 34% of the adult female harvest, which was a decrease of 4 percentage points from 2008 (Table 2). The proportion of 2.5 year-old males in the adult stayed the same as 2008, while the corresponding female statistic increased 3 percentage points over last year. Among adult males in the sample, 24% were estimated to be ≥ 3.5 years old, up 4 percentage points from 2008 and the highest statistic recorded for that category in recent years.

The proportion of 1.5 year old males in the harvest has decreased substantially since 1999 (Figure 1). During this same time frame, the number of yearling females in the harvest has been relatively stable. It is unknown whether this is a result of the implementation of the One Buck Rule in 2002.

The proportion of 1.5 year-old males in the adult male harvest can provide insight into and a measure of the effects of past antlerless harvests on current herd recruitment. This value, as a measure of a change in demographics, can also give indications of large increases in harvest pressure in a given area. Table 3 shows the average age of adult males and females harvested during the opening weekend of firearms season between 1993-2009. The average age of harvested females experiences moderate annual changes, but stays relatively stable throughout time.



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Table 1. Number of deer checked in during opening weekend of the 2009 firearms season.

	0.5	1.5	2.5	3.5+	Total
Female	182	163	185	133	663
Male	212	656	740	440	2,048
Total	394	819	925	573	2,711

Table 2. Age structure of adult deer examined during opening weekend during the 2001-2009 firearms season. (Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding)

Sex	% of Adult Harvest in Age Class			
	Year	1.5	2.5	3.5+
Female	2001	40	35	24
	2002	40	35	25
	2003	40	36	23
	2004	37	36	28
	2005	42	33	25
	2006	38	39	23
	2007	38	38	24
	2008	38	35	27
	2009	34	38	28
Male	2001	56	31	14
	2002	53	33	14
	2003	54	30	16
	2004	50	35	15
	2005	50	35	16
	2006	46	38	16
	2007	44	39	17
	2008	40	40	20
	2009	36	40	24

Table 3. Average age of adult harvested deer during the first weekend of firearms season (93-09).

Year	Adult Male	Adult Female
1993	2.05	2.62
1994	1.98	2.55
1995	1.99	2.59
1996	1.99	2.43
1997	2.09	2.59
1998	2.02	2.60
1999	2.01	2.53
2000	2.01	2.53
2001	2.10	2.48
2002	2.13	2.50
2003	2.14	2.46
2004	2.17	2.57
2005	2.19	2.47
2006	2.23	2.49
2007	2.26	2.53
2008	2.36	2.58
2009	2.44	2.67

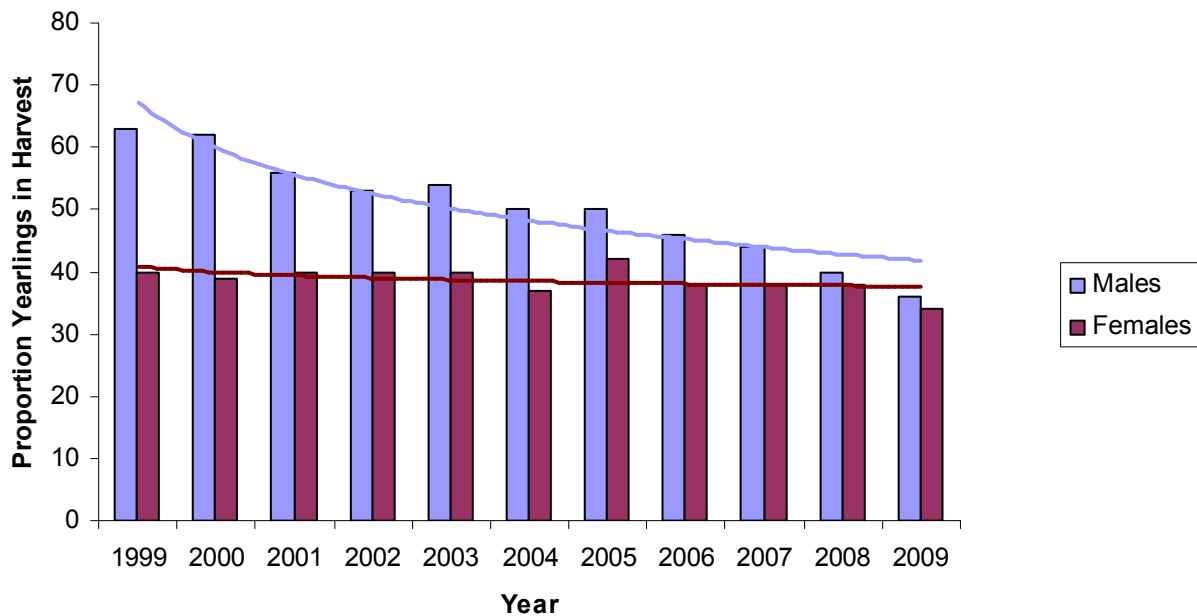


Figure 1. Proportion of yearlings in Indiana's deer harvest (1999-2009) for males and females with corresponding logarithmic trendlines.